

Representative Town Meeting of Darien, CT RULES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Special Meeting, May 4, 2006

8:15 p.m., Town Hall, Room 213

Committee Attendance: K. Armour, D. Maroney, S. Morton, H. Pegler, M. Pontius, B. Puzyk, V. Riccardo, G. Swenson, M. Thorne, J. Warren, V. Wenger

Absent: J. Davis, B. Rayhill

Ms. Armour called the meeting to order at 8:20 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to review the status of pending items and to create the Agenda for a Special RTM meeting called for May 22, 2006.

To begin, Ms. Armour noted that the reference to approval of the new Town Plan of Conservation and Development by the Board of Selectmen that appears in the minutes of the Committee's 4/10/06 meeting is in error, and should be deleted. The Committee accepted the minutes, as so amended, without objection.

Hindley School Roof Appropriation: The Committee unanimously agreed to add an additional appropriation of \$130,000 for repairs to the Hindley School roof to the Agenda for the RTM's 5/8/06 Budget meeting. The bids for this job were higher than budgeted due to rising petroleum prices, and the work must be completed over this coming summer. The responsible RTM Committees (**F&B and Education**) are scheduled to meet in advance of the RTM's 5/8/06 session, to consider and act upon the additional appropriation. Mr. Maroney wondered whether an additional appropriation can be made for the Royle School roof now too, as prices are likely to rise beyond the amount currently budgeted for that roof. Ms. Armour recommended that Mr. Maroney contact Mr. Hovell, and Mr. Warren observed that perhaps the contractor who will be repairing the Hindley roof could expand the contract to include Royle and do both.

Health District with New Canaan: The Committee then discussed the major proposed Agenda item for the 5/22/06 Special meeting: the formation of a Health District with New Canaan. Ms. Armour reported that the Ad Hoc Health District Planning Committee (the "Health District Committee") will hold a Public Information meeting on 5/9/06 and the RTM's Public Health & Safety Committee and Board of Selectmen will jointly hold a Public Hearing on 5/17/06 to introduce the proposal to the Town. Supporters of the proposal hope that the RTM, which is the body authorized to direct Darien's participation in a Health District under the applicable State law, will act before 6/1/06 (*i.e.*, at the 5/22/06 Special meeting) so that a newly formed Darien/New Canaan Health District can receive State funding in the current fiscal year (2005-2006) and during a two year trial period.

Members of the Committee were concerned that the proposal is being rushed in order to secure the 2005-2006 funding just as the fiscal year is ending, and that the RTM, in general, and the appropriate RTM Committees, in particular, (see below) will have neither enough information nor time to consider the matter sufficiently. Ms. Armour noted that the Health District Committee has not released information about the pros and cons, or comparative costs of participating in a Health District. The alternatives to participating in a Health District are to continue to operate the current

part-time Health Department or form a full-time Health Department.¹ Mr. Warren observed that if creating a Health District with New Canaan requires a change to Darien's Charter, there is no practical possibility that the TGS&A Committee could consider the matter properly and hold a public hearing about such a change prior to the RTM's 5/22/06 Special meeting. After further discussion about health services in Darien and the need for more information about the proposed Health District, the Committee unanimously agreed to assign the matter to the **Public Health & Safety** (primary), **TGS&A** and **F&B** (secondary) Committees.

Gorham Pond Gift: The Committee then unanimously agreed to assign the acceptance of a gift from Friends of Gorham Pond to fund repairs to the dam to the **Public Works** (primary) and **F&B** (secondary) Committees.

The Three Leases: Ms. Armour reported that leases with Continental Motors (BMW), the Darien Arts Center and for the cell tower, which were placed on the Agenda for the 5/8/06 Budget meeting, are subject to mandatory referrals to the Planning & Zoning Commission, which next meets on 5/9/06. Hence, the leases will not be ready for RTM consideration on 5/8/06, but should be ready for consideration on 5/22/06.

Ad Hoc Committee on Town Hall Finance Functions: Messrs. Morton and Wenger and Ms. Pontius are actively recruiting members for the Ad Hoc Committee. Work is likely to start before the summer.

Darien Code Modifications: Mr. Warren reported that the TGS&A Committee will turn its attention to this matter soon.

The Committee then unanimously agreed that the Moderator shall open the 5/8/06 Budget meeting with a request to amend the Agenda to include consideration and action upon the Hindley School roof appropriation and the gift from the Friends of Gorham Pond. Ms. Armour will ask Mr. Fox to draft an appropriate resolution and Mr. Crary to prepare a memorandum.

The Committee then unanimously agreed that the Agenda for the RTM's 5/22/06 Special Meeting shall consist of:

1. The Three Leases, provided that the P&Z Commission will have completed its consideration of the leases; and
2. The Formation of a Health District with New Canaan.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Riccardi, Clerk

¹ Philip Weyhe, Chair of the RTM's Health & Public Safety Committee and a member of the Health District Committee, e-mailed such information to the Committee and the RTM's District Chairs on 5/4/06 at 9:23 p.m.